

Appendix A

Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

303(d) Waters: A list submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency which identifies waters that do not meet water quality standards for specific substances or the designated use. Also referred to as the List of Impaired Waters. The list is required under the Clean Water Act and is prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Alluvium: Soil or rock material, such as gravel, sand, silt, or clay deposited by flowing water.

Animal Waste Management: A group of practices including barnyard runoff management, nutrient management, and manure storage facilities designed to minimize the effects of animal manure on surface and groundwater resources.

Aquifer: Underground water reservoirs found within layers of permeable rock, sand or gravel.

Basin: A large geographic area comprised of many small watersheds.

Basin Water Quality Management Plan (208 Plan): A plan to document water quality conditions in a drainage basin and make recommendations to protect and improve water quality. Each basin in Wisconsin must have a plan prepared for it, according to Section 208 of the Clean Water Act.

Best Management Practice (BMP): Structural and nonstructural measures, practices, techniques or devices employed to avoid or minimize sediment or other pollutants carried in runoff.

Buffer Strips: Strips of grass, shrubs, trees and other vegetation between disturbed areas and a stream, lake or wetland.

Conservation Easement: A legal document that limits the use of land for purposes such as farming, open space, or wildlife habitat. A landowner may sell or donate an easement to a government agency or a private land trust.

Conservation Plan: A record of the decisions and intentions made by land users regarding the conservation of the soil, water and related natural resources of a particular unit of land.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP): A provision of the federal Farm Bill that takes eligible cropland out of production and puts it into grass or tree cover for 10-15 years.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): Program partnership between USDA, DATCP, and Waukesha County that enhances the conservation payments of the regular CRP.

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP): The state agency responsible for establishing statewide soil and water conservation policies and administering the state's soil and water conservation programs. The DATCP administers state cost-sharing funds for a variety of LCC operations, including support for staff, materials and conservation practices.

Department of Natural Resources (DNR): The state agency responsible for managing and protecting land, water and air resources of the state. DNR also administers programs to regulate, guide, and assist Land Conservation Departments and individual land users in managing land, water, fish and

wildlife. The DNR administers state cost-sharing funds for priority watershed projects, Targeted Runoff Management (TRM) grants, Lake Planning and Protection grants, and Urban Nonpoint Source Construction and Planning grants.

Environmental Corridor (Primary and Secondary): A composite of the best individual elements of the natural resource base including surface water, streams, and rivers and their associated floodlands and shorelands; woodlands, wetlands and wildlife habitat; areas of groundwater discharge and recharge; organic soils, rugged terrain and high relief topography; and significant geological formations and physiographic features.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): The federal agency responsible for enforcing federal environmental regulations. The EPA delegates some of its responsibilities for water, air, and solid waste pollution control to state agencies.

Erosion: The process of detachment, transport and deposition of soil, sediment or rock fragments by action of water, wind, ice or gravity.

Eutrophication: The process by which lakes are enriched with nutrients, increasing the production of rooted aquatic plants and algae. The extent to which this has occurred is reflected in a lake's trophic classification: oligotrophic (nutrient poor), mesotrophic (moderately productive), and eutrophic (very productive and fertile).

Exotic Species: A non-native species introduced from another geographic area.

Farm Service Agency (FSA): Part of the United States Department of Agriculture, the FSA administers agricultural assistance programs including price supports, production controls and conservation cost-sharing.

Groundwater: Water that flows below the ground surface through saturated soil, glacial deposits or rocks.

Household: A household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit—defined by the Census Bureau as a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single-room that is occupied, or intended for occupancy, as separate living quarters.

Hydric Soil: A soil that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part.

Impaired Waters: See 303(d) Waters.

Impervious Surface: An area that releases all or a large portion of the precipitation that falls on it, except for frozen soil. Conventional rooftops and asphalt or concrete sidewalks, driveways, parking lots and streets are typical examples of impervious surfaces.

Infiltration: The movement of precipitation or runoff into or through the soil.

Infiltration System(s): A device or practice such as a basin, trench, rain garden or swale designed specifically to encourage infiltration of precipitation or runoff.

Invasive Plants: Primarily non-native, aggressive plants that out compete and displace native plants in an ecosystem.

Land and Water Conservation Board (LWCB): The statutorily defined advisory body to the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. Consists of three local elected officials, four appointees of the Governor, and leaders from the DNR, DATCP, and DOA. Oversees the approval of county land and water resource management plans.

Land Resources Division (LRD): The Land Resources Division of the Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use.

Milligrams per Liter (mg/l): A measure of the concentration of a substance in water. For most pollution measurements this is the equivalent of “parts per million.”

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Part of the United States Department of Agriculture, the NRCS provides soil survey, conservation planning and technical assistance to local land users.

Nonpoint Source Pollution: Pollution which sources cannot be traced to a single point such as a municipal or industrial wastewater treatment plant discharge pipe. Nonpoint sources include eroding farmland and construction sites, urban streets, and barnyards. Pollutants from these sources reach water bodies in runoff, and can best be controlled through proper land management.

Nutrient Management Plan: A guidance document that provides fertilizer and manure spreading recommendations for crop fields based on soil test results and crop needs.

ORW/ERW: DNR classifies streams and lakes as Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) and Exceptional Resource Waters (ERW) as listed in NR102.10 and NR 102.11. ORW waters have excellent water quality and high-quality fisheries and do not receive wastewater discharges. ERW waters have excellent water quality and valued fisheries but may already receive wastewater discharges.

Phosphorus: A key plant nutrient that, when reaching lakes in excess amounts, can lead to over fertile conditions and algae blooms.

Point Source Pollution: Sources of pollution that can be traced back to a single point, such as a municipal or industrial wastewater treatment plant discharge pipe.

Priority Farms: Farms identified by the county for having excessive runoff from soil erosion and/or manure runoff resulting in existing or potential water quality problems.

Regional Storm Water Management Plan: A planning document, adopted by a local unit of government, which coordinates storm water management activities for an entire drainage area or watershed, including future land development activities within the watershed. The plan may prescribe the use of BMPs for individual development sites and for selected points within the watershed to meet the goals and objectives of the plan.

Riparian: Belonging, living, or relating to the bank of a lake, river, or stream.

Riprap: Broken rock, cobbles, or boulders placed on the bank of a stream or lakeshore to protect it against erosion.

Runoff: Water from rain, snowmelt, irrigation or construction dewatering, not absorbed by the soil, that flows over the ground surface and returns to streams and lakes. Runoff can collect pollutants from air or land and carry them to receiving waters.

Sediment: Soil particles suspended in and carried by water as a result of erosion.

Storm Water BMP: Any best management practice that is designed to collect or manage the quantity or quality of storm water runoff for an indefinite time period. Examples include, but are not limited to: wet or dry detention basin, infiltration trench or basin, bio-retention basin, stilling basin, green roof, filter strip, artificial wetland, or any combination of these or other permanent storm water management practices.

Suspended Solids: A measure of the particulate matter in a water sample, usually expressed in milligrams per liter.

Technical Standard: A document that specifies design, predicted performance and operation and maintenance requirements for a material, device or method.

Tolerable Soil Loss (T-Value): The maximum average annual rate of soil erosion for each soil type, measured in tons per acre, per year, that will permit a high level of crop productivity to be sustained economically and indefinitely.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL): The maximum amount of a pollutant that can be discharged into a stream without causing a violation of water quality standards.

Trophic Status: The level of productivity of a lake as measured by phosphorus content, algae abundance, and depth of light penetration.

Turbidity: Having suspended or stirred up particles, referring to a lack of water clarity. Turbidity is usually closely related to the amount of suspended solids (sediment or algae) in water.

Universal Soil Loss Equation: An equation used to estimate the amount of soil lost annually per acre from crop fields. It takes into consideration the following factors: rainfall, slope, slope length, soil erodibility, crop rotations, and crop practices (NRCS Agricultural Handbook 537).

Variance: Government permission for a delay or exception in the application of a given law, ordinance, or regulation. Also see water quality standard variance.

Watershed: The geographic area that drains to a particular river, stream or water body.

Water Quality Standards: The legal basis and determination of the use of a water body and the water quality criteria; (physical, chemical, or biological traits of a water body) that must be met to make it suitable for a specified use.

Water Quality Standard Variance: When natural conditions of a water body preclude meeting all conditions necessary to maintain full fish and aquatic life and swimming, a variance may be granted.

Wetlands: An area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophytic vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions.

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP): A provision of the federal Farm Bill that compensates landowners for voluntarily restoring and protecting wetlands on their property.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP): Federal program to help improve wildlife habitat on private lands.